

The Lexington Intelligencer.

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NATCHEZ UNDER-THE-HILL.

Mr. George Wilson Visits the Historic Old City.

COMPARES NATCHEZ WITH OUR CITY.

Thought he was in a Hold-up—Sees Many Fat, Sleek Negroes.

NATCHEZ MISS., July 7, 1902.

EDITOR INTELLIGENCER:—Leaving

Kansas City at 10 p. m. by the Port

Arthur route I waked with daylight

enough to see our thriving zinc city

of Joplin. From there to the Arkan-

sas line and in northwest Arkansas

there is some pretty country with

fine springs. Arkansas is the woman's

rights state—where the women exer-

cise their natural right to "chaw

tobakker" on a perfect equality with

the men. The road swings over into

the Choctaw country below Fort

Smith on account of hills, and there

is much good valley land there

belonging to Indians, but tilled by

whites. Everything looks well down

to the promising city of Shreveport.

Io passing through the corner of

Texas, before getting into Texarkana,

there was some excitement forward,

and a drunken passenger holding to a

lever out the air brake connection as

the car lurched and he swung to it.

Taking it all together the first thing

I thought of was a hold-up, so I

opened my grip quickly and got

ready that article that is sometimes

so badly needed in Texas, for in early

times on the U. P. we invented a way

of using them in a crowded car with-

out endangering the lives of passen-

gers. But it turned out to be the

conductor and brakeman quelling a

fight between two negroes. They

bounced one, a noted desperado, hand

and foot and cast him—not into the

outer darkness—but into the baggage

car and gave him to the officers.

The Red River from Shreveport is

navigable to the Mississippi. By

rail directly east to Rayville in Louis-

iana, and from Rayville south to

Natchez on a Missouri Pacific branch

the country is suffering for rain. The

corn is practically ruined and cotton

in danger. It was the glorious

Fourth as I came through and it was

generally observed by whites and

blacks. The latter were very numer-

ous, very black, very sleek and fat

and jolly, laughing and enjoying

themselves, well dressed and with

good behavior and little or no rowdy-

ism. One would not know that they

are groaning under the grievous

oppression of the whites as the

orators of the tory (formerly repub-

lican) party tell us.

We cross the mighty Father of

Waters on a train transfer boat, and

I do not see why the Santa Fe can

not do the same at Lexington. It

would please Commodore Plk Davis

and Rear Admiral Frank Kriehn to

see the long transfer barges handled

by a tug at the stern with her bow

pushing. There are some queer look-

ing craft in the Natchez navy, but

should these two "old sea-dogs" ever

come down with their flag ship, the

Ariel, ("named for some one of

Christ's apostles" as Bob Chesney

said) the story of Santiago would be

cast in the shade. Natchez reminds

me of Lexington; it is over twice as

large, but the streets "just to 'ole"

clean, the plenty of negroes, the old

style houses intermixed with new.

My ancestor Stokes, of North Carolina,

was one of the last agents for the

Natchez Indians, who were a part of

the Aztecs, it is said.

The thermometer runs about 90 to

93, the heat is not oppressive, and I

do not think it would hurt a strong

young white man to work in the fields

if a temperate liver any more than to

eat in town and drink whiskey and get

a schirrous liver. Except the temporary

drought the outlook in the south is

not bad. Natchez was smart enough

to hold a part of the bluff for a park,

not large and no expense to keep up,

but very nice for the people to sit in

and look far and wide across the

bottom and up and down the noble

river, an advantage Lexington has

lost.

There is a federal cemetery here,

on the bluffs out of town, most hand-

somely laid out and the superintendent,

Capt. Taylor from Illinois,

courteously showed me over it.

Joining it is the town cemetery; in

some old and neglected corner of it

lies the dust of my father's uncle. I

have the last letter that my father

ever got from his own father, coming

to him when a cadet at West Point,

and opening with the news of the

death of "your uncle Charlie Wilson

of yellow fever at Natchez, Miss."

No doubt my grandfather congratulated

himself on being safe in the

salubrious climate of Ohio, with his

young and energetic helpmeet and

his children blooming around him,

but it was only a month later that

one morning he went to his office,

after the usual kisses for wife and

children, and before noon fell dead at

his desk from apoplexy. When the

"Grim Reaper" reaches for us circum-

stances matter little.

Our state is bound to Natchez by

the sublime poetry of Mr. Chamber-

lain's spy, Lord John, ay, whose

hero, Jim Bludso, had

"One wife at Natchez-under-the-hill

And another one here in Pike."

That part of Natchez still exists.

Ice factories and electric fans are

doing much for the south. But not-

withstanding all they owe to science

the southerners won't go back on

religion. Sunday the town is shut up,

you can't get a soda—hardly. The

men considerably shut themselves up

in clubs and thus the ladies can

be quietly devoted to church undis-

turbed. And there's a whole lot of

large, splendid-looking women in the

south.

It was the southern whites who

only wanted to be let alone in

1861; now if the meddlers will just

let the negroes alone all will be well,

for nowhere in the world have they

such chances as here in the cotton

states. Railroad rates are high, ser-

vice just fair. Hotel rates much

higher than with us for the same

quality of accommodation. The

south is "getting away" with the

far west as a home for new comers.

The true financial system would make

it the best business section in the

union.

G. W.

Cutting Serape in Ray County.

Two men, Hugh Caloway and "Doc"

Johnson, were moving a house on

Capt. Rankin's place, at the end of

the railroad, across the river from

Lexington, Monday. Both men had

been drinking freely and finally began

a game of craps. A dispute followed,

ending in a fight, in which Caloway

was cut in several places and Johnson

bruised considerably. Johnson then

went to the ferry boat and while on

board Joe Caloway, father of Hugh,

assaulted him. Johnson drew his

knife and slashed Caloway across the

abdomen before the crew interfered.

The cut was about six inches long

and very deep, the bowels being

severed in four places, resulting in

the death of Caloway Thursday evening.

Johnson immediately fled, but was

caught about two o'clock next morn-

ing at his home, about a mile below

the ferry landing, on the Ray county

side. He was taken to Richmond and

is now in jail there.

At the last meeting of the city

council an ordinance was passed to

provide for compelling property-

owners to put down and maintain

good sidewalks. We do not know

whether the ordinance can be enforced

or not, but we hope it is in such

shape that it can be enforced. Here-

tofore property-owners have paid no

attention to orders from the council

in regard to sidewalks, and we have

some very disreputable walks where

we should have good ones. The IN-

TELLIGENCER believes it to be the

duty of every property-owner to have

enough pride in the city, and in his

own possessions, to keep his sidewalks

in good condition. If he will not do

so voluntarily, he should be made to

do so. Every citizen is interested;

and when a dozen people keep up

good walks, the man who lives along

this line of good walks should not be

allowed to destroy the line by keeping

a patch of rough paving, full of mud

holes.

A BIG STORY ABOUT "COIN" GOLD.

Narrative of Robbers' Cave in Benton County, as H. E. Steegman Tells It.

HOW DID THIS GOLD GET TO BE "COIN?"

Three Wealthy Men Killed by Indians and Their Gold Hidden in a Cave.

Henry C. Steegman, foreman of the mines at Raymond, Benton county, which are operated by George R. Raymond, of Sedalia, was in that city recently and related to a Democrat reporter an interesting story concerning some Spanish gold which is supposed to be hidden in a cave near Lincoln, Benton county.

The cave in question is known as "Robbers' Cave" and has been visited by many Sedallians while on fishing and hunting excursions. Mr. Steegman was told the story of the gold by an old farmer who is a resident of the county, and immediately headed a party in search of the hidden treasure. Although they succeeded in finding the "signs" as indicated in the legend, they were unable to locate the gold.

There are two caves known as "Robbers' Cave." One of them is a few miles from Lincoln, on the banks of Cole Camp creek, and is famous as a camping ground. The other is found by following the stream until almost in sight of the Osage river, when a bluff rises. By taking a skiff and rowing around the face of the bluff the entrance to the second cave can be seen, half way up the wall of rock. To obtain an entrance it is necessary to climb slippery rocks, with but slight footholds, when the explorer finds himself inside a long but narrow rift. This is the original "Robbers' Cave," made famous by the exploits of the Smith brothers during the war, and the one around which the hidden treasure legends cling.

The cave is inaccessible except from the water or by swinging over the top of the cliff with a rope.

The story told by the farmer to Mr. Steegman is a thrilling one and full of interest.

The farm on which the narrator lives is near the cave. There were numerous Indian graves on his place, which he or his sons had dug up at various leisure times through curiosity. They had obtained Indian arrow heads, stone tomahawks, utensils, beads made of teeth and various other things, but placed no great value upon them. While opening one of the graves a larger arrow head than usual was discovered, on which was carved a triangle within which were three dots.

The farmer, knowing nothing of Indian lore, did not attach any importance to the carving, and never made an attempt to find out what the signs meant. He placed the large arrow head with the others and preserved it because he had nothing better to do with it.

One day one of the farmer's smaller sons came running into the house and excitedly told his father that an Indian was in the field and was digging in a grave. The father went out to investigate, though he didn't particularly care if the Indian amused himself digging, providing he was peaceable and law-abiding.

The Indian seemed to have traveled far. He paid no attention to the farmer as he came up until he was spoken to. Then he arose from his work. He was able to speak English and the owner of the land asked him what he wanted. After he had talked with him for sometime the Indian told him that he was searching for an arrow head buried with his father, a chief, that had some bearing with his rights in the tribe of which he was a member, and described the arrow marked with a triangle which had been found.

The result of the pow wow was that the farmer proceeded to his home and brought out the arrow, together with a bottle of mountain dew, for he desired to get the Indian communicative if possible and per-

haps learn something about the peculiar markings.

The whisky had some effect, but a sight of the arrow head had more. The Indian led the farmer away from his two boys and offered that if he would give him the arrow head he would show him where he could find some hidden gold, and a great deal of it.

He told him that his tribe formerly roamed over the country of which Benton county is now a part, and that it was a legend of the tribe that long years ago, in the time of his grandfathers many years back, three white men, the first that the tribe had ever seen, had come among them, bringing much of the yellow metal. They had been members of an exploring party which had come in the country—it is presumed they were members of DeSoto's expedition which touched in Southern Missouri. The three had done some crime and had then stolen the gold and escaped from the party to make their home among the Indians until they could find their way back. The had wandered until they reached the Indians on the Osage, who received them very kindly and let them live among them. But the pale-faces stirred up strife and proved themselves unworthy of the hospitality bestowed upon them. The result was that the Indians decided that the gold was the distinguishing element, and decided to kill the three men. This they did and carried their bodies to a secret recess of the "Robbers' Cave," where they left the gold piled beside them.

The farmer was perfectly willing to part with the arrow head if he could exchange it for gold, and the Indian lead the way to the "Robbers' Cave." A boat was always kept near the bluff, for fishing is excellent at the mouth of the Cole Camp, and it was used for that purpose. With the Indian he climbed into the boat and rowed around to the cave, then both climbed up the slippery rocks to the interior.

The Indian went back a short distance, rolled away a stone which seemed a part of the wall, and showed an opening into which he bade his companion to enter. The white man was cautious and motioned the Indian in first, then followed. The interior was dimly lighted, but he saw that it was small. He gazed around the chamber and his eyes soon became accustomed to the semi-darkness. Then he beheld a sight that chilled him. Three skeletons were lying on the floor of the chamber beside a pile of gold coins.

Involuntarily he gave a cry and the savage unsheathed a knife and started toward him. He had evidently enticed the farmer to the cave with the intention of killing him and taking the arrow head.

The farmer was unarmed, and being thus defenseless he started toward the opening. He escaped before the Indian could reach him and swung down the rocks. The Indian waited long enough to close the opening and followed, but the fleeing man had pushed the boat away and was rowing for the bank. The Indian slipped into the water and swam after him.

The former gained the shore and, taking an oar from the rowlock, waited for the redman to land.

He thought that the savage would certainly not continue his attack, but the Indian had no intention of giving up. He scrambled up the bank and again charged on the white man, who waited until he came close and then gave him a smashing blow on the head which felled him. The Indian never regained consciousness and was buried near the cliff, where his grave can now be seen.

The farmer had noticed on the inside of the rock removed from the opening a triangle through which were three straight lines. Afterward he searched every nook and cranny of the cave, but never could he discover where the opening was.

The party, of which Mr. Steegman was a member, discovered a similar sign on the wall of the cave, but there was no opening back of it. Several parties are reported to have made searches, but all efforts to find the gold have been unrewarded with success.

A Good Thing for Lexington.

Mr. E. Hoffman, who has for two or three years been boring for water for an ice plant, has at last completed a well about one thousand feet deep, which he thinks will supply all the water he needs. The well has a capacity of 60 gallons every minute without decreasing the water in the well.

It was soon discovered that this well was strongly impregnated with sulphur and salt. Our people have taken many trips to the well, and have drank freely of the cool water. Some of our business men have been keeping the water in their offices, and the INTELLIGENCER has kept a supply for all visitors. We are satisfied that the water is a valuable discovery, and we believe it superior to the Excelsior Springs water. Mr. Hoffman has sent samples of the water away for analysis.

Mr. Wm. H. Chiles, who has for a long time been using Blue Lick water, says the Hoffman well is not quite so strong in sulphur, but is a little stronger in salt than the Blue Lick water. He feels certain that the use of this home water will prove beneficial to dyspeptics and sedentary people.

We have drank from all the springs around Sweet Springs and MacAlister, and we found no water as pleasant to the taste as the Hoffman well water. It is about as strong in sulphur as the black sulphur spring, and carries enough salt to relieve the sulphur taste, which is unpleasant to many people. We would be glad see a public drinking fountain erected near the public square, and supplied with water from this well. We believe the general health of the city would be improved.

A Card.

In our sorrow and loneliness, at the death of our dear wife and mother, we see and feel that we are not alone. We have Him to comfort us who is the giver of all good, and we have those who knew and loved her here.

How kind the people of Lexington, Bates City and county in general have been to us in this, our sad bereavement. They have lightened our sorrows by their sympathetic expressions and tender cares; they have done more! they have made us better by their goodness to her before going to Texas; their kindness to the family whilst she was away and the tender manner in which they laid her to rest, as well as their after thoughtfulness of us. Better neighbors, truer friends or more sympathetic people no one could ask. We do truly thank you, one and all, for your many acts of kindness, for your sympathy and for the many tokens of love and respect placed upon our dear one's grave. May God bless you.

Thankfully,
Geo. W. BATES AND CHILDREN.

Road Meeting.

There was a called meeting of the citizens of Lexington last night at the court house to receive the report of the committee appointed at a previous meeting to survey the proposed changes in route of the Wellington road. Mr. J. R. Moorehead, chairman of the committee, reported that a practicable route had been found and surveyed, the proper papers drawn up, and notices posted. He stated farther that nearly all of the land owners along the proposed road would give the right-of-way willingly. The committee was continued to wait upon the county court at its August session, and a collection was taken to defray the expenses of the survey.

The show tent of Spedden & Paige